

# Indiana House of Representatives

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## News and Information

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### **STILWELL: PUBLIC INPUT NEEDED TO ENSURE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS GET STATE ATTENTION**

INDIANAPOLIS – As the Daniels Administration and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) attempt to implement new policies that could delay or even eliminate critical road construction projects, State Rep. Russ Stilwell (D-Boonville) said area residents need to speak out now to ensure that these projects do not fall by the wayside.

“With the blessings of our governor, INDOT is attempting to change decades of public policy by implementing a 10-year plan for projects and requesting legislators and residents detail priorities in which road and bridge projects should be completed in that time frame,” Stilwell said. “Rather than taking the steps to do their job, INDOT is creating an atmosphere where partisan politics can play a larger role in determining which projects get state support.

“In the 74<sup>th</sup> House District, we have a series of projects that are equally important to helping our area move ahead,” he continued. “All of them deserve equal consideration from INDOT and the governor.”

Stilwell noted he is very concerned about progress on three projects that are in varying stages of completion:

- Completion of construction of an improved State Road 62 from Chandler to Boonville. Stilwell said four miles of four-lane divided highway have been completed, with another 10 miles left to go.
- Construction of the Boonville Connector, a bypass around the community that will help alleviate traffic problems in an area that sees as many as 30,000 vehicles travel through it every day.
- Continued progress on improvements to U.S. 231 from the Natcher Bridge that spans the Ohio River to Rockport. Stilwell said four miles of the road are currently under construction on a project that will help link the bridge with Interstate 64 and then to Huntingburg and to Jasper.

“All of these projects are critical to the future economic and residential growth of this area,” Stilwell said. “It is unfair for the state to ask us to choose which of them should be funded, which should be set aside for several years, and which should be cancelled completely. They are equally important, and I think the state should recognize that importance, and plan accordingly.

“Rather than grading all projects objectively and ranking them on their merits and the availability of funding over several years, INDOT and the governor are creating a situation where projects can be completed based on political influence, the same way the BMV elected to keep some license branches in Indiana, simply because they fell in the districts of certain legislative leadership,” he added. “People need to take action now and make sure that our state fixes our roads in Southwest Indiana in a manner that benefits all Hoosiers, not just a select few.”

To register their concerns, Stilwell said residents should contact both the governor’s office and INDOT.

To reach Gov. Daniels, call 1-317-232-4567, e-mail him through his Web site at [www.IN.gov/contact.html](http://www.IN.gov/contact.html) or write to him in care of The Office of the Governor, Room 206, 200 W. Washington St., Indianapolis, IN 46204.

To contact INDOT, call 317-232-5533, e-mail the agency at [www.IN.gov/dot/contact/](http://www.IN.gov/dot/contact/) or write to 100 N.

